

Please cancel claims 1-8, 14, 21, 27-29, and 52-55, without bias or prejudice.

Please amend the claims as follows:

~~15.~~ (Twice Amended) A center beam rail road car comprising:

a deck structure supported on rail car trucks for rolling motion in a longitudinal direction; said deck structure including a pair of first and second end portions, and a medial portion carried between said end portions, said medial portion being stepped downwardly relative to said end portions;

a center sill running along said deck structure;

said center sill having a first center sill end portion, said center sill end portion having an upper flange and a pair of spaced apart webs extending downwardly from said upper flange;

a central beam assembly running lengthwise along said rail road car between said end portions, said beam assembly standing upwardly of said deck structure;

said first end portion of said deck structure including an end portion deck sheet; and

a draft pocket cap plate mounted within said first center sill end portion between said pair of spaced apart webs, said draft pocket cap plate lying at a lower level than said end portion deck sheet, whereby a draft pocket is defined between said pair of webs and below said draft pocket cap plate.

~~16.~~ (Amended) The center beam rail road car of claim ~~15~~ wherein a first bolster extends laterally from said center sill to support said first end portion of said deck structure, said bolster having a upper flange extending in a plane lying at a greater height from top of rail than said draft pocket cap plate.

~~17.~~ (Twice Amended) The center beam rail road car of claim ~~15~~ wherein:

said center sill has a central portion adjacent to said medial portion of said deck structure and first and second end portions adjacent to said first and second end portions of said deck structure;

said central portion of said center sill has an upper flange, a pair of spaced apart webs extending downwardly from said upper flange and a lower flange mounted to said webs, said upper flange, said lower flange and said webs of said center sills defining a hollow box beam;

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said medial portion of said deck structure has a deck sheet; and  
said lower flange of said central portion of said center sill is mounted at a level  
corresponding to said deck sheet of said medial portion of said deck structure.

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22. (Amended) The center beam car of claim 15 wherein said deck sheet of said first end  
portion of said deck structure is mounted to said upper flange of said first end portion of  
said center sill, said sheet extending laterally outboard from said center sill.

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30. (Twice Amended) A center beam rail road car comprising:

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a deck structure carried on railcar trucks for rolling motion in a longitudinal direction, a  
pair of first and second bulkheads extending upwardly of said deck structure at  
either end thereof, and a central beam assembly standing upwardly of said deck  
structure and running lengthwise along said deck structure between said  
bulkheads;

said deck structure being supported by a center sill, said center sill having a first,  
longitudinally outboard portion located longitudinally outboard of one of said  
trucks, and a second, longitudinally inboard portion located between said rail car  
trucks;

said second portion being narrower than said first portion;

said first, longitudinally outboard portion of said center sill having members defining a  
draft pocket therein, and said first, longitudinally outboard portion of said center  
sill having an overall height greater than said draft pocket;

said deck structure including first and second end portions and a medial portion between  
said first and second end portions, said medial portion being stepped downwardly  
relative to said end portions by a distance of at least 30 inches; and

said medial portion of said deck structure being supported from said longitudinally  
inboard portion of said center sill, and a first of said end portions of said deck  
being supported from said longitudinally outboard portion of said center sill.

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43. (Twice Amended) A center beam rail road car comprising:

a deck structure supported on rail car trucks, said deck structure having first and second  
end portions and a medial portion lying between said first and second end  
portions, said medial portion being stepped downward relative to said end  
portions;

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a central beam assembly running lengthwise along said rail road car between said end portions, said beam assembly standing upwardly of said deck structure; and said medial portion being stepped downward relative to said end portions by a distance of at least 30 inches;

said deck structure is supported by a center sill,

said center sill has a first portion mounted between said trucks, said first portion having a height and a width, said height being greater than said width;

said center sill has at least one internal web mounted therewithin;

said web is a first web;

said central beam assembly includes at least one post standing upwardly of said center sill, said post having a second web standing cross-wise relative to the lengthwise direction of said rail road car; and

said first web is positioned to provide web continuity with said second web.

Please add the following new claims:

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64. (New) The center beam rail road car of claim 9 wherein said medial decking portion is stepped downwardly at least 30 inches relative to said end decking portions.

65. (New) The center beam rail road car of claim 15 wherein said medial portion of said deck structure is stepped downward a distance of at least 30 inches relative to said end portions.

Also attached hereto is a marked up version of the changes made to the specification and claims.